

August 30, 1955

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Dear Kim:

Your letter told me all I needed to know; namely that you would not be embarrassed or offended if the possibility of an academic chair for you were discussed,

I hope you will think very carefully about going to Camp Detrick. I am very dubious that you would get either Larry or Norton; they had been approached before. Of course, if you were there it doubtless would encourage some good people to go who might otherwise be reluctant, but I doubt if that would be enough. The salary angle doesn't seem too convincing either, unless you have foregone all hope and have been spoiled for academic life. ~~Then~~ You probably could find ways of supplementing your income in a university job by consultancies, etc., especially as a physician. Of course, even if you do move for now, I will assume that you are not going to be permanently unavailable.

As to Jacob-Mollman, I think you've hit the nail right on the head, in every respect. This looks like another one of the seven-league jumps; has everyone forgotten the Hayes-Watson fad so soon? Frankly, I was a little annoyed (not at Jacob) but at the tone of MHA's writeup of it in Science, and perhaps overhastily wrote up the letter enclosed. (Please return it when convenient, and your comments will be quite welcome.) I am inclined to agree with you that there is going to be a surprising answer in due course. The postzygotic loss is, I think, basically correct but it is ~~more~~ more of a description than an explanation. Unfortunately, the Bris crowd has been disinclined to work with diploids, though they've had stocks for quite a while that they could use if they wanted to do the work, and they have correspondingly shrugged all of the diploid studies off as something they won't consider.

The idea of a chromosome(s) gradually moving in is not completely ridiculous; it could also be oriented, e.g. by a mobile centromere, but it is equally possible the issue would be inherently selected! But as you say, there are more questions than answers.

Yours sincerely,


Joshua Lederberg

P.S. One arrangement I had in mind would be that an appointment you might fill could be held open until after your service was completed. As to that, you will, after all doubtless be assigned to Naval Medical Research or the like in any event whatsoever.